

**City of Greensboro Planning Department  
Connections 2025 Comprehensive Plan Text Amendment  
January 19, 2005 Public Hearing**

*The information provided in this staff report has been included for the purpose of reviewing proposed Connections 2025 Comprehensive Plan Text Amendments. In considering amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, the City shall be guided by factors that include, but are not limited to: the need for the proposed change; the effect of the proposed change on the need for city services and facilities; the implications, if any, that the amendment may have for other parts of the plan; and unforeseen circumstances or the emergence of new information (e.g. significant economic opportunity in Tier 2 or 3). Plan Amendments are heard by the Planning Board, and recommended to the City Council for final action.*

**Case Number:** CP-04-12

***Staff Initiated Request:***

A. Amend Chapter 4 Land Use, Section 4.3 Generalized Future Land Use as follows:  
(all new text is underlined and old is shown with strikethroughs)

1. Add the following statement to the end of the first paragraph, "As Connections 2025 is implemented, small area plans, neighborhood plans, corridor plans, etc. will be developed. These plans will be created at and depict a greater level of detail than the Generalized Future Land Use map (Figure 4-2). Therefore, any such plans adopted subsequent to adoption of Connections 2025 are incorporated into the Plan and referenced on Figure 4-2. All such plans shall be considered when making land development decisions. Greater emphasis should be placed on detailed policies, plans, studies and other documents over those setting forth generalized comprehensive planning objectives." [Click here to see illustrative map.](#)
2. Amend the **Moderate Residential** density range to read as follows: "over 5 to 12 dwelling units".
3. Amend the **High Residential** definition to add the following as the last sentence: "Within this district, office buildings may also be accommodated."
4. Amend the **Mixed Use Commercial** definition to add the following as the last sentence: "New "strip" commercial development is discouraged."
5. Amend the second and third sentences of the **Mixed Use Corporate Park** definition to read as follows: "Primary uses such as office, flex office, technology research and development, light manufacturing, distribution, and

assembly are strongly encouraged to be developed prior to or in conjunction with any supportive uses. The primary uses should be placed developed in a campus-like or "corporate park" setting..."

- B. Amend *Figure 4-2 Generalized Future Land Use* map to add a clarification statement to read as follows: "This map is to be interpreted in conjunction with the goals and policies set forth in the *Greensboro Connections 2025 Comprehensive Plan*. This map has no independent significance without reference to the *Greensboro Connections 2025 Comprehensive Plan*."

## CONNECTIONS 2025 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

### Reinvestment Areas

Reinvestment areas are neighborhoods and districts within Greensboro's urban areas that would most benefit from actions to promote compatible infill development and other forms of investment and reinvestment.

### Reinvestment Corridors

Reinvestment corridors are older commercial corridors that would benefit from significant public and private investment to enhance their economic viability and strengthen adjacent neighborhoods.

## POLICIES

6A. Implement a comprehensive neighborhood conservation and improvement program.

6A.1 Using the recommendations of the Neighborhood Planning and Service Delivery Report as a foundation, implement a Neighborhood Planning Initiative to promote the conservation and enhancement of existing neighborhoods in a comprehensive, coordinated manner.

### **Definitions** (as they currently read):

#### Moderate Residential (6 to 12 dwelling units per gross acre)

This category accommodates housing types ranging from small-lot, single-family detached and attached single-family dwellings such as townhomes to moderate density, low-rise apartment dwellings.

#### High Residential (over 12 dwelling units per gross acre)

This category provides for high-density apartment dwellings, condominiums, life care, and similar housing types. Creating opportunities for this type of housing will become increasingly important to respond to demographic shifts and demand for affordable housing, and it is ideally suited near major activity and employment centers and in areas suitable for future transit service.

### Mixed Use Commercial

This designation is intended to promote a mix of uses, of which various commercial uses remain predominant, but where residential, service, and other uses are complementary. Where applied to older highway corridors characterized by "strip" commercial uses, the intent is to encourage infill and redevelopment for a more diverse and attractive mix of uses over time. Examples include residential units over commercial uses or a wider array of economically viable uses to replace obsolete uses. Such areas also may represent opportunities for the introduction of substantial higher density and/or mixed-income housing, with negligible impacts on, or resistance from, nearby single-family neighborhoods. Ensuring that buildings are of the appropriate scale and intensity is critical, as is ensuring that sites are designed in a coordinated, as opposed to a lot-by-lot, manner.

### Mixed Use Corporate Park

This designation is intended for large tracts of undeveloped land near the City's fringe that are appropriate for well planned, larger scale business/employment parks with supporting uses such as retail, hotels, and residential. Primary uses such as office, flex office, technology research and development, light manufacturing, distribution, and assembly should be placed in a campus-like or "corporate park" setting with generous, linked open space to maximize value and to promote visual quality and compatibility with the surrounding area. Pedestrian-friendly features such as buildings placed near the street, sidewalks, and trails leading to nearby uses such as retail and housing should be encouraged.

## STAFF ANALYSIS

### **Need for the Proposed Change:**

1. Incorporation of Plans: The Comprehensive Plan calls for the development of corridor, area, and neighborhood plans to be developed to implement the goals and policies of the Plan. Therefore, when these Plans are adopted they should be incorporated into the Plan so that they can be referred to when making development decisions. These types of plans offer a more detailed set of land use and development recommendations than the Generalized Future Land Use Map. By adding this statement we are ensuring and clarifying that these types of plans are to be used in conjunction with the more general when they are available.
2. Amending Moderate Residential Density Range: There is currently a density gap between 5 and 6 dwelling units per acre between the Low Residential (currently 3-5 du/acre) and the Moderate Residential (currently 6 -12 du/acre) land use classifications. By modifying the Moderate Residential land use classification density to read "over 5 to 12 dwelling units per acre", the gap and any confusion associated with it is eliminated. This means that developments with 5 dwelling units per acre or

less would be considered Low Residential and developments with over 5 dwelling units to the acre would be considered Moderate Residential.

3. Amending High Residential Definition: Currently the definition for the Multi-family land use classification does not accommodate office buildings. Policies of the plan such as reducing auto trips and promoting walkability support placing employment close to housing. When considering these policies, office buildings and multi-family developments can be compatible uses and therefore can be accommodated within the same land use classification. It is important to note the wording which says that "...office buildings may also be accommodated". Compatibility will still need to be assessed through the setting, scale, massing, and design to determine whether or not the uses will ultimately be compatible.
4. Amending Mixed Use Commercial Definition: One of the goals of the Plan is to improve the quality of development and within the definition there is encouragement to diversify the mix of uses in older highway corridors over time that are characterized with "strip" commercial uses. Staff felt that it was necessary to clarify that within new developments that the same type of "strip" development that we are working to redevelop in the older corridors shall be discouraged from being initiated within new commercial developments.
5. Amending the Mixed Use Corporate Park Definition: The primary intent of this land use classification is to encourage corporate park developments in a campus-like setting with supporting uses retail, hotels and residential (e.g. Piedmont Center). Since the adoption of the Plan, there has been a desire for the developers to develop the supporting uses for corporate users that will follow later. Therefore, a modification of the definition was deemed necessary to state that the corporate uses "...are strongly encouraged to be developed prior to or in conjunction with any supportive uses." This will help prevent the designated corporate land areas from being consumed by supporting uses and not leaving enough room for the corporate user.
6. Clarification statement on the Generalized Future Land Use Map: This statement emphasizes that the map and the written text of the Plan are to be used in conjunction with one another and that the map should not be used in isolation to make land use interpretations.

**Effect of the proposed Change on the Need for City Services and Facilities:** None

**Implications, if any, the Amendment may have for Other Parts of the Plan:**

1. Incorporation of Plans: As area plans are adopted they could increase the desire for additional area plans to be developed.

2. Amending Moderate Residential Density Range: No implications anticipated.
3. Amending High Residential Definition: This amendment furthers the goals of mixing uses where appropriate and it works towards reducing the number of auto trips.
4. Amending Mixed Use Commercial Definition: No implications anticipated.
5. Amending the Mixed Use Corporate Park Definition: No implications anticipated.
6. Clarification statement on the Generalized Future Land Use Map: No implications anticipated.

**Unforeseen Circumstances or the Emergence of New Information (e.g. significant economic opportunity in Tier 2 or 3):**

1. Incorporation of Plans: None.
2. Amending Moderate Residential Density Range: The gap was an oversight.
3. Amending High Residential Definition: None.
4. Amending Mixed Use Commercial Definition: None.
5. Amending the Mixed Use Corporate Park Definition: We did not anticipate the degree of interest and resulting pressure to develop the supporting uses without the corporate component.
6. Clarification statement on the Generalized Future Land Use Map: We did not foresee that the map would be considered and used without regard to the text.

### STAFF COMMENTS

The proposed text amendments are a result of monitoring the Plan since adoption. When the Plan was adopted it was fully expected that amendments would be necessary to refine the Plan due to unintended interpretations, oversights, glitches, mistakes, new trends, etc. By making these amendments we are acknowledging that this document will need to change over time in order to remain current and relevant.

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Based on the information provided in this report, staff supports these changes due to factors such as:

- keeping the Plan relevant and current;

- implementing the Plan through the recognition and promotion of corridor and neighborhood plans;
- clearing up confusion (e.g., gap between Low and Moderate Residential densities);
- further supporting the goals of mixed use and the reduction of auto trips (e.g. allowing offices in the multi-family land use classification); and
- clarifying intent (e.g., types and timing of development, tying the map to the text of the Plan).

Staff recommends approval of the amendments contained in this report.